

REMARKS

Attached hereto is the Abstract of the Disclosure added by the current amendment. Claims 1-15 have been canceled and Claims 16-30 added. No new matter has been introduced with the additions to the specification or with the newly added claims.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Claims 1-15 have been cancelled and newly added Claims 16-30 are believed to be definite and correct the specific items pointed out by the Examiner.

Regarding Examiner's referral to Claim 9 as being a substantial duplicate of Claim 8, Applicants' newly added Claims 23 and 24 are believed to not be duplicates. Specifically, Claim 23 calls for the connection channels to be arranged on a single theoretical, hypothetical circumferential line, thus arranged in a single plane, while Claim 24 calls for the connection channels to be arranged on more than one theoretical, hypothetical circumferential lines, thus being in more than one plane.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-6, 12, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), Bilton U.S. Pat. No. 3,377,957 does not disclose the hydrodynamic coupling called for by Applicants' newly added Claims 16-21, 27, and 28. Although Bilton discloses a hydrodynamic coupling having two blade wheels 1 and 2 together forming an operating space capable of receiving an operating medium, the reference is directed to an overload protection device in the form of a fusible plug assembly (Fig. 2), which is formed with a discharge passage 10 blocked by a body 16 of low melting point alloy. Discharge tube 10 is connected to discharge outlets 11 for exhausting the operating medium outside the casing 4 upon melting of the fusible plug body 16. Therefore, the discharge passage does not disclose the connection channel according to Applicants' Claim 16, because the discharge tube does not connect the toroidal operation space 5 (Applicants' Fig. 1) to the intermediate space 27 between the pump blade wheel 3 and the housing 26 as called for by Applicants' Claim 16. Therefore Bilton does not disclose a structure for obtaining a rinsing effect for deposits collected in the space between the blade wheels and the housing.

Applicants therefore submit that Claim 16 and Claims 17-21, 27, and 28 which depend therefrom are not anticipated by Bilton.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 1-11, 14, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), Applicants' newly added Claims 16-26, 29, and 30 are not anticipated by Mueller, U.S. Pat.

No. 3,782,514. Mueller discloses a hydrodynamic brake having a stator housing containing a rotor wheel, rather than a hydrodynamic coupling having a housing containing a pump blade wheel and a turbine blade wheel as called for by Applicants' Claim 16. Referring to Fig. 3 of Mueller, supply passages 10 and 11 provide a flow of braking fluid through pipes 12 and 13 into chambers A and B. Additionally, connecting passage 14 permits braking fluid to flow between chambers A and B. Braking fluid is discharged through cylindrical gap 15 to discharge duct 9 for reintroduction to inlet passages 7 and 8.

Thus, Mueller does not disclose a pump blade wheel defining at least one connection channel between the toroidal operating space and the intermediate space, the connection channel having at least one directional component oriented essentially tangential to the contour of the circulation of the operating medium in an operating space between the pump blade wheel and the turbine blade wheel, such that a rinsing effect of the operating medium is achieved in the intermediate space, as called for by Applicants' Claim 16. In the case of a hydrodynamic brake as disclosed by Mueller, there is no advantage to a rinsing effect as impurities building up between the housing and wheel are advantageous for the function of a brake, unlike the hydrodynamic coupling called for by Applicants' Claim 16.

Applicants therefore submit that Claim 16 and Claims 17-26, 29, and 30 which depend therefrom are not anticipated by Mueller.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 16-30 are in condition for allowance.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

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In the event that any questions remain or any further discussion is required, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (219) 424-1692.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231, on: July 30, 2002

JOHN F. HOFFMAN, REG. NO. 26,280

Name of Registered Representative

Signature

July 30, 2002

Date